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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT Tuesday, January 13, 1931.

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

Subject: "Winter Salads." Approved by the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Bulletin available: "Aunt Sarmy's Radio Recipes."

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"Did someone invent salads or did they just come?"

Betty Jane paused before taking the last mouthful of a large plate of lettuce and asked this question of Uncle Ebenezer.

"I believe Betty Jane is a salad addict," said Uncle Ebenezer seriously. "No one ever has to urge her to eat her green vegetable every day. And the very sight of a lettuce leaf or a raw carrot or a tomato draws her just like a magnet."

Betty Jane's mother smiled proudly. "Correct training accounts for that, Uncle Ebenezer. My children all began to eat vegetables at an early age. First, they learned to eat strained vegetables in puree, and, when they were a little older, they were served nice whole wheat bread sandwiches filled with vegetables chopped up fine and mixed with butter."

"Perhaps the pet rabbits had a lot to do with it, too," said Billy. "Betty Jane began to watch those rabbits at an early age and learned how to appreciate carrots and lettuce from them."

Betty Jane waited patiently for a pause in the conversation. Then she looked squarely at Uncle Ebenezer.

"What I want to hear about is when salads first happened and who invented them. I think I should have liked her."

Uncle Ebenezer shook his head. "Dear me. Even Betty Jane gives women the credit for everything in this world. It was a man who invented salads. Shall I tell you a story about it?"

"Will it have a happy ending?" asked Betty Jane.

"Very happy. Once upon a time there lived a citizen of old Rome who was very fond of good meals and liked plenty of variety in them. He had a great imagination and enjoyed experimenting with the supplies in his kitchen to see what new dishes he could invent. Unfortunately, his cook had a bad temper and never wanted to have her kitchen disturbed. So he had to wait until Thursday afternoon when she had her day off. Then he used to come home early from the office and invent to his heart's content. One Thursday when he reached home he found that the cook had left him some herbs for supper. There was nothing he liked better than herbs, but on this day he thought they tasted a little dry and lacked flavor. He decided that a sauce of some kind would make them better. So he took some olive oil from his cruse. (There was probably an olive orchard behind his house.) Then he went to his lemon grove, picked some lemons and squeezed the juice. Then he returned to his kitchen and took down a big bowl from the high shelf. He put the olive oil, the lemon juice and the herbs in that bowl along with some salt and spices and he mixed them all up together. You should have seen how he smiled after one taste of that first salad which was his own invention. The joke of it is that what that old Roman invented was a truly French salad and the dressing was what we call French dressing.

"A good story," said Betty Jane, "but too short."

"Well, if you want to know more about salads, ask your Aunt Sammy. She has a book with at least twenty salad recipes in it and she is a salad enthusiast herself."

Uncle Ebenezer is right. I confess that I have a good many ideas about salads and that I think a good salad is about the <u>most</u> delicious thing ever invented.

In my grandmother's day -- and even later -- salads were considered mere luxuries and frivolities in the diet. When they were served, which was not too often, it was to make the meal look attractive and add a fresh new flavor. People didn't appreciate salads in those days as they are beginning to in this enlightened age. They had not yet heard about those useful and valuable vitamins and minerals in fruits and vegetables, especially in raw fruits and vegetables.

But you and I and the other modern housewives today, Geraldine, are giving salads more of the attention they deserve. We realize some of their many virtues. If only I were a poet I should try to extol the virtues of salads in verse. I have often thought that a beautiful salad would make an inspiring subject for a poem. The first line could begin: "Cool, crisp and colorful it stands--" but I can't seem to think how to go on from there. I do feel sure that some poet is losing a great opportunity in not allowing a salad to be his inspiration.

Salads add color and attractiveness to our meals. They provide a very effective and appetizing way of introducing minerals and vitamins in the diet. They help stimulate appetites by their appearance and by the vitamin B they contain. They give variety to the menu. They provide a delicious way of serving raw fruits and vegetables. Last but not least, they can be made of a large

variety of foods and so many combinations that they are most useful in using up left-overs. Isn't that enough to prove that salads are useful, good and beautiful and deserve an important place on the family menu the year around?

I'd like to repeat that last phrase. Salads the year around. Salads in spring, summer, autumn and winter! Just why some housewives banish the salad bowl to the high shelves for the winter is more than I can understand. Winter meals need crisp, fresh, bright foods just as much as summer meals and we all need those health-giving minerals and vitamins at this season. Fortunately, greens and other fresh foods for salads are to be had today, not only during the warm weather when we can grow them in our gardens, but also in the winter months. Beside these there are canned food of all kinds that may be depended on for our salads.

Greens for the foundation of winter salads can be of different kinds. Beside lettuce, which seems to be the most popular, there are tender green cabbage leaves, endive, watercress and even celery leaves or sprigs of parsley for garnish. Many markets also carry escarole and chicory. Several different kinds of greens mixed with French dressing make a good salad course for a hearty meal. Delicate green lettuce, creamy yellowish chicory and dark-green watercress in a bowl together would tempt anyone's appetite. A simple salad of this sort may be prepared at the table by the host or hostess. For more elaborate salads, some may be served in the salad bowl, some molded in gelatine, and some arranged on individual salad plates. Vegetables, fruits, meats, fish and eggs may all be diced and molded in jelly. Vegetables are delicious molded in tomato aspic. For a dessert salad, a ring mold of fruit served on lettuce with a pile of whipped cream or cream salad dressing in the center is most attractive.

Success in salad making depends on several things. The greens, for example must be crisp, dry and thoroughly clean. Wash them carefully in cold water and place them in a clean towel. Pat them dry. To keep them crisp put them in a tightly covered dish with only the little water that clings to the leaves and place the dish in the refrigerator or other cold place. Some people wrap the lettuce in cheesecloth and others use a knitted lettuce bag, if the greens are to be used the day they are bought. A friend of mine discovered a very efficient way of separating the leaves in a firm head of lettuce. She cuts out the stem end or core about one inch and lets cold water run into the opening made in this way. Then she turns the head right side up to drain. The leaves will separate readily and be crisp and dry for serving. She also has a fine method for using up the outer leaves which are often withered or brown on the edges and not attractive to use. She trims off these imperfect places with her kitchen scissors, and rolls the leaves into a firm roll. Then she shreds the roll with a stainless steel knife or her scissors and uses the shredded greens in a little nest foundations for her salad.

There are some things to be said also about the salad mixture. Be sure to have it cold and moist, with no excess liquid. You know how unpalatable a watery salad looks and is. It spoils the whole effect of a dish that should look dainty and fresh. More than that, the extra liquid dilutes the dressing. So be sure the greens are sufficiently dry and that no extra juice is left on

the fruits or vegetables used. Meats, fish and most cooked vegetables have more flavor in salad if they are allowed to stand in French dressing a half an hour or so before being served in the salad. They should of course be drained and cold before mixing with the crisp plants. Except for these ingredients, the salad should not be combined until the last minute before serving. Oil dressing wilts green leaves and draws out juices.

For winter salads we especially recommend apple combinations, cabbage, tomato aspic and orange and grapefruit combinations. Directions for making them all are in the green cookbook. Here is an opportunity for every housewife to use her artistic talents and make much needed foods appeal to the family. When you are preparing your next salad, remember the old saying, "The eye does half the eating."

Wednesday: "Wabbling Parents." And a dinner menu to suit the whole family.

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